

### **P&Z STAFF REPORT**

Board of Appeals Meeting, April 1, 2020

Case: V20-0014—1425 N. Riverside Circle

Staff Contact: Madalyn Smith (MSmith@SandySpringsGA.gov)

Report Date: March 12, 2020

### **REQUEST**

Request for a Variance from Sec. 2.3.2.A. to allow a house to encroach 27 feet into the required 60-foot minimum primary street building setback.

APPLICANT		
Property Owner:	Petitioner:	Representative:
Russell Schoneberger	Russell Schoneberger	N/A

### **SUMMARY**

The applicant requests a Variance to allow a house to encroach 27 feet into the required 60-foot minimum primary street building setback. The subject lot is located in the Chattahoochee River Corridor and has an overall slope of 36%. Due to the extreme topography, adherence to the 60-foot primary street setback makes construction extremely challenging.

### RECOMMENDATION

### **Department of Community Development**

Staff recommends **Approval** of **Variance** V20-0014.

### MATERIALS SUBMITTED AND REVIEWED

#### Materials:

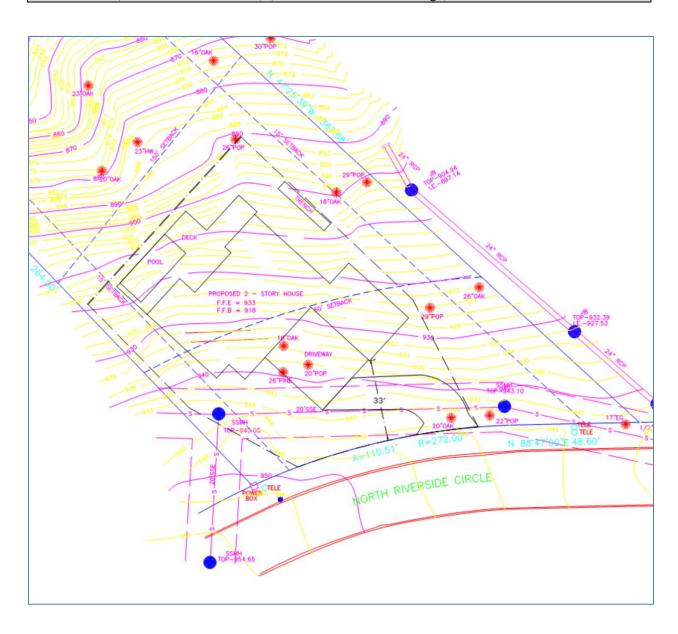
- 1. Application, received March 3, 2020
- 2. Topography renderings, received March 5, 2020
- 3. Updated letter of intent received March 10, 2020

#### Plans:

1. Site plan prepared by Alpha Land Services received March 3, 2020

PROPERTY INFORMAT	TION
Location:	1425 North Riverside Circle
Location.	Parcel # 17 012900020032
Council District:	3 – Burnett
Road frontage:	Approximately 150 feet of frontage on North Riverside Circle
Acreage:	Approximately .93 acres
Current Zoning:	RD-27 (Residential Detached)
Existing Land Use:	Undeveloped
River Corridor Review:	RC83-24FC
Previous Zoning Case:	N/A
Character Area:	Protected Neighborhood

## **SITE PLAN** (received March 3, 2020) (full size Site Plan in Package)



### PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The applicant proposes to develop an existing vacant lot with a single unit detached residence. The proposed home would be approximately 5,000 square feet; approximately 1,500 square feet would encroach within the 60-foot primary street setback.

The following images show the existing conditions of 1425 N Riverside Circle.



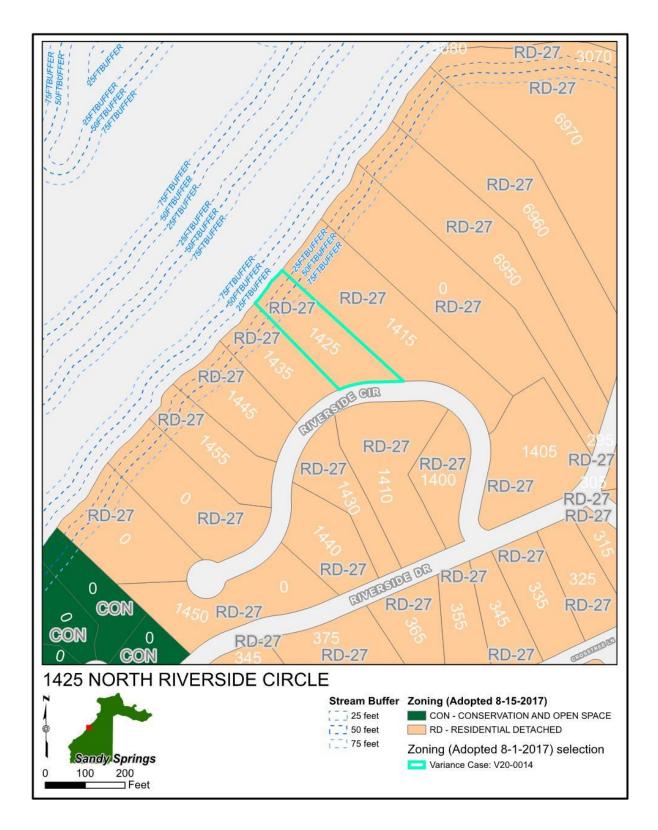


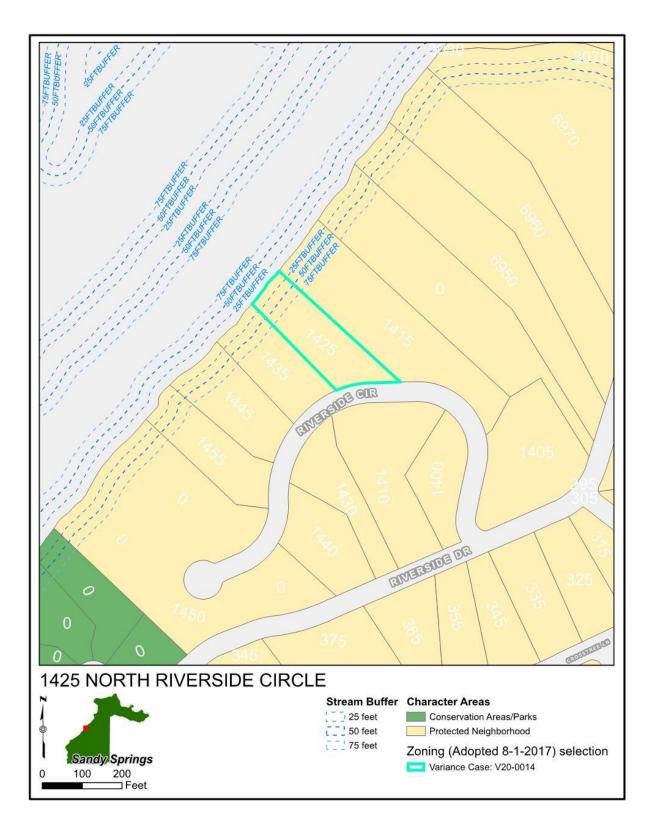
(All photographs by Madalyn Smith, February 2020)

<b>EXISTING</b>	ZONING AND LAND USES OF P	ROPERTY IN THE VICINITY	
Location relative to subject property	Zoning / Land use	Address(es)	Land area (acres) (approximate)
North	Chattahoochee River		
East	RD-27 / Single Unit Detached	1415 NORTH RIVERSIDE CIR	2.17
South	RD-27 / Single Unit Detached	1410 RIVERSIDE CIR	1.33
West	RD-27 / Single Unit Detached	1435 NORTH RIVERSIDE CIR	.9
PROPOSED	DEVELOPMENT		
	RD-27 / Single Unit Detached	1425 NORTH RIVERSIDE CIR	.93

# **AERIAL IMAGE**







### VARIANCE CONSIDERATIONS

Per Sec. 11.6.2. of the Development Code, the following list of approval criteria for a Variance provides guidance for making decisions on approval:

- 1. Variances will only be granted upon showing that:
- a. The application of this Development Code would create an unnecessary hardship, and not merely an inconvenience to the applicant; or
- b. There are extraordinary and exceptional conditions due to the size, shape, or topography, which are specific to the subject property and not generally found in similar properties;

Finding: The subject lot has significant challenges due to extreme topography. The lot drops down towards the Chattahoochee River at an average slope of 36%, which is very steep and is designated as an area of Steep Slopes by the Development Code (Sec. 9.4.2.E.). The lot gets progressively steeper behind the setback. Due to the slope, the application of the 60-foot setback would require clearing and land disturbance that is much more extensive and intrusive; both clearing and grading are discouraged in the River Corridor.

Approximately half the lot is unbuildable due to the 150-foot setback from the Chattahoochee required by the River Protection Act. In addition, a sewer easement runs across the front of the property that would not allow the larger retaining walls that are required for a longer driveway. For these reasons, Staff finds that there are extraordinary and exceptional conditions due to the topography of the site.

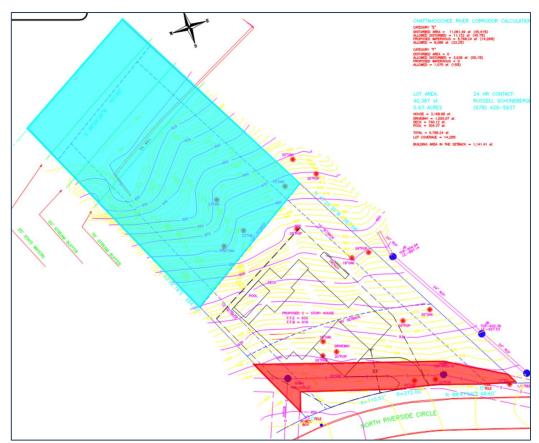


Figure 1. Site plan with the river setback shown in blue and the sewer easement shown in red

- 2. Further, the application must demonstrate that:
- a. Such conditions are not the result of action or inaction of the current property owner; and Finding: The conditions are not the result of action or inaction of the property owner.
  - b. The Variance request would provide the minimum relief necessary to make possible the reasonable use of the property; and

Finding: The applicant's request to encroach within the 60-foot setback would provide relief for the applicant to develop the topographically challenged lot and minimizes disturbance within an environmentally sensitive area.

c. The Variance request would result in development that is consistent with the general intent of this Development Code, with the Comprehensive Plan policies, and would not be detrimental to the public good, safety and welfare.

Finding: Allowing this encroachment minimizes clearing and land disturbance, which ensures conservation of land. Additionally, several of the homes in the Chattahoochee North subdivision are constructed with a ~ 20-foot setback thus the requested variance would not be atypical in this established neighborhood. For these reasons, Staff finds that the request is consistent with the general intent of this Development Code, with the Comprehensive Plan policies, and would not be detrimental to the public good, safety and welfare.

### COMMENTS FROM OTHER PARTIES

### **Sandy Springs City Engineer:**

- 1. Recorded plats shows 60' building Setback. 2017 Development Code change had no effect on the platted setback under previous codes.
- 2. There is no recorded record of the building setbacks being granted a variance by the Fulton County Commission. All recorded documents reference the plat recorded at Book 126 Page 91 or Book 140 Page 16, which is a more recently recorded play of North Chattahoochee Subdivision.
- 3. Property to East appears to have been constructed within compliance of the setbacks.
- 4. It is unclear if the proposed construction / limits of building would fit within the building setbacks as shown. As such, the requested variance may allow a larger footprint than would be allowed only within the regulatory setbacks.
- 5. The topography on this parcel will require difficult construction.

### Sandy Springs Chief Environmental Compliance Officer:

Comment / No comment provided.

#### **Correspondence Received:**

No public comment was submitted in writing

### DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATION

Following review, and based on the findings, Staff recommends **Approval** of **Variance** V20-0014, request for a Variance from Sec. 2.3.2.A. to allow a house to encroach 27 feet into the required 60-foot minimum primary street building setback, subject to the following condition:

1. The intrusion into the primary street setback be limited to and substantially similar to that shown in the site plan, prepared by Alpha Land Services, received March 3, 2020



MAR 03 2020

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

## **VARIANCE APPLICATION**

(Excludes Stream Buffer Variances)

**Application Checklist:** 

Page No.	Item	Completed/ Included in Submittal
1	Project Information Sheet	Z
2-3	Detailed Process and Instructions	N/A
4-5	Authorization Forms	N N
6	Letter of Intent	
6-7	Variance Analysis	
7	Chattahoochee River Corridor Certificate	or N/A
7-8	8½" x 11" copy of Survey	
7-8	81/2" x 11" copy of Site Plan can print if needed	
7-8	11" x 17" copy of Survey	
7-8	11" x 17" copy of Site Plan can print if needed	
7-8	Two (2) full-scale copies of Survey	
7-8	Two (2) full-scale copies of Site Plan	
7	8½" x 11" copy of Legal Description (must be in Word format)	
	11" x 17" copy of Elevations and/or Sections	or N/A
9	Meeting Schedule	N/A
9	Fee Schedule	N/A
10	Sign Specifications	N/A
9	Fee Payment	
	All documents in electronic form (jump drive)	

The Director reserves the right to request additional information deemed necessary to analyze the request. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Community Development

Planner's initials:

SANDY SPRINGS

MAR 03 2020

GEORGIA

Case No.: \\\\ZO-001\right\rig

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

### PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET





MAR 03 2020

City of Sandy Springs
Community Development

Sworn and subscribed before me this

### AUTHORIZATION FORM - PART I

A- The property owner must fill out the following section and have it notarized. If a property has multiple owners, each owner must separately fill out a copy of the authorization form.

Owner states under oath that he/she is the owner of the property described in the attached legal

description, which is made part of this application.

Owner's name: 205501 School 5

Address	4th day of Feb	20 20
City, State, Zip Code:	Notary public:	_
SONDY SPN - 5 30328	fre	
Email address:	Seal:	
Phone number	NINASSA BAR	11/1/2
Owner's signature:	NOTARI	7 1
/ //	EXPIRES	1 1
	GEORGIA March 6, 2022	∄
	O. PUBLIC	March 6,2
	Commission expures:	1 is March 6,2
	7,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,	
B- If the applicant is <i>not</i> the owner of the subject pro	• •	
Fill out the following section, check the appropri	ate statement, and have it notarized.	
Applicant states under oath that:		
☐ He/she is the executor or Attorney-in-Fact under a P	ower-of-Attorney for the owner (att	ach a copy
of the contract); or		
☐ He/she has an option to purchase the subject propert		
☐ He/she has an option to purchase the subject propert☐ He/she has an estate of years which permits the apple		
☐ He/she has an option to purchase the subject propert☐ He/she has an estate of years which permits the appl Applicant's name:	icant to apply (attach a copy of the	lease)
☐ He/she has an option to purchase the subject propert☐ He/she has an estate of years which permits the appl Applicant's name:  Company name:		lease)
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☐ He/she has an option to purchase the subject propert ☐ He/she has an estate of years which permits the appl Applicant's name: Company name: Address: City, State, Zip Code: Email address:	Sworn and subscribed before day of	me this
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# APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE LETTER OF INTENT

MAR 03 2020

February 29, 2020

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

The Application is from the property owner - Russell Schoneber at 1425 N. Riverside Circle, Sandy Springs, GA 30328

### 1. Statement of Ownership and Interest

The tract or parcel of land lot 129 of the 17th District of Fulton County and being Lot 12 of the Chattahoochee North Subdivision. Plat Block 126 of page 91 in Fulton County Records.

### 2. The General Purpose and Letter of Intent

Variance is sought to build a single family residence. The applicant request the following variance. Is to reduce the front setback from 60ft to 33ft. The proposed house footprint is 3200 square feet with approximately 5000 total square feet. Approximately 1,500 square feet is in the front setback.

- a. After 2 years and multiple designs we finally found a design that will work with the steep topography that minimizes the impact on the environment and enhances the neighborhood. The issues are numerous to build in accordance with the 60 ft setback.
  - i. They include a steeper topography inside the buildable area than within the setback as we proposed. The sewer line that runs diagonal from the front of the property right of the property to middle left of the property.
  - ii. Orientation of the garage is a major challenge in the design, if built the garage down the plane of the front elevation of the house with a front opening it has to be farther back from the front door due to building codes. Due to the setback, the street being at a curve and the steepness of the lot it makes this extremely difficult to do this type of design.
  - iii. Setting the house back farther from the street means the driveway will be longer thus more impervious surfaces and retaining walls will need to be built.
- b. My design Promotes Conservation of the Land by reduces the number of trees to be cut down. The lot is quite wooded in the lower area of the buildable area.
  - i. This design promotes a low amount of impervious with less than ½ of the allowable impervious being used.
  - ii. This design provides additional space from the 150ft stream buffer thus providing more environmental buffer from the Chattahoochee River
- c. The house will be inline with the neighboring houses on the street to the West as they are all built within the 60ft setback.
- d. My neighbors approve of the variance and I have included letters of their support.



MAR 03 2020

### 3. Variance Analysis

- e. The steep topography of the lot requires the house to be built closer to the road. The sandy springs topography of the lot spans from 950 to 806 (more than 144ft difference in elevation) unity Development is further complicated with the West side of the lot at a higher elevation than the East side by more than 30 ft.
- f. The developers of the subdivision have set a 20ft setback on the site plans for my property and the 3 neighbors to the left (West) along the same road. See Chattahoochee North Plat for reference.
- g. Building higher on the slope of the lot will promote the architectural aesthetics of the house and the neighboorhood. If we built all within the 60ft setback you would only see the roof of the house from the street.
  - i. This also provides for a side entry garage that matches the design of the other homes on the street.
- h. This will be my second house that I will build on the same street on the Chattahoochee River. I know and respect the importance of minimizing the impact in the Chattahoochee River Corridor. In fact, the site inspector from the City of Sandy Springs complimented me on keeping the double silt fences clear as we do routine cleaning as part of our construction practice.
- We have taken into account to provide double silt fences to protect the river and designed storm water management system for the house to have all downspouts go into the gravel filled underground stormwater retention trenches.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Russell Schoneberger Property Owner 1425 N. Riverside Circle, Sandy Springs GA 30328

### Horst, Alexandra

From:

Smith, Madalyn

Sent:

Tuesday, March 3, 2020 2:31 PM

To:

Horst, Alexandra

Subject:

FW: Variance Application 1425 Riverside Circle

Attachments:

Final APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE Letter of Intent 1425 N Riverside Circle.docx

RECEIVED

MAR 03 2020

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

From: Russ Schoneberger <rschoneberger@gmail.com> Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 2:30 PM

To: Smith, Madalyn < Madalyn. Smith@sandyspringsga.gov> Subject: Re: Variance Application 1425 Riverside Circle

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Madalyn,

I added an image snippet and pointed out a major hardship within the buildable area that is 20 foot cliff drop. Please use this version of the Letter of Intent. Tomorrow I will have an image and a graphical video of the undisturbed lot that my architect is creating. I will send to you when he has it completed.

Thank you so much!

Russell Schoneberger

On Tue, Mar 3, 2020 at 11:49 AM Smith, Madalyn < Madalyn.Smith@sandyspringsga.gov > wrote:

Sounds good. Thanks!

From: Russ Schoneberger < rschoneberger@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2020 11:48 AM

To: Smith, Madalyn < Madalyn.Smith@sandyspringsga.gov > Subject: Re: Variance Application 1425 Riverside Circle

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi Madalyn,

I will come up to the office at 12:30 PM today. Will this time work for you?

## MAR 03 2020

# APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE LETTER OF INTENT

City of Sandy Springs
Community Development

February 29, 2020

The Application is from the property owner - Russell Schoneber at 1425 N. Riverside Circle, Sandy Springs, GA 30328

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### 2. The General Purpose and Letter of Intent

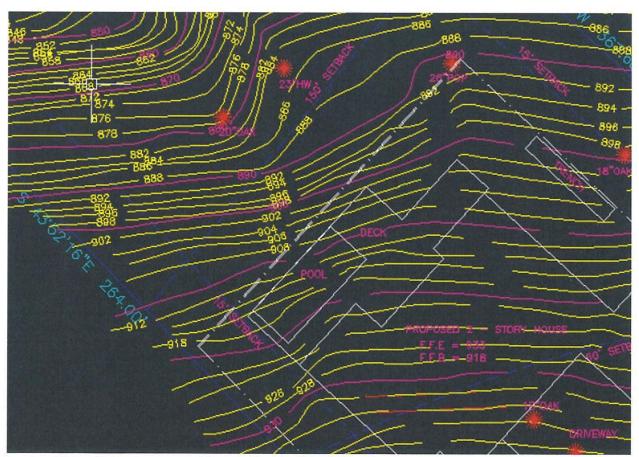
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  - ii. Orientation of the garage is a major challenge in the design, if built the garage down the plane of the front elevation of the house with a front opening it has to be farther back from the front door due to building codes. Due to the setback, the street being at a curve and the steepness of the lot it makes this extremely difficult to do this type of design.
  - iii. Setting the house back farther from the street means the driveway will be longer thus more impervious surfaces and retaining walls will need to be built.
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  - i. This design promotes a low amount of impervious with less than ½ of the allowable impervious being used.
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- c. The house will be inline with the neighboring houses on the street to the West as they are all built within the 60ft setback.
- d. My neighbors approve of the variance and I have included letters of their support.

3. Variance Analysis

City of Sandy Springs

- e. The steep topography of the lot requires the house to be built closer to the road. The topography of the lot spans from 950 to 806 (more than 144 ft difference in elevation). It is further complicated with the West side of the lot at a higher elevation than the East side by more than 30 ft.
- f. The developers of the subdivision have set a 20ft setback on the site plans for my property and the 3 neighbors to the left (West) along the same road due to the steep topography. See Chattahoochee North Plat for reference.
- g. Building higher on the slope of the lot will promote the architectural aesthetics of the house and the neighboorhood to align with neighboring homes. If we built all within the 60ft setback you would only see the roof of the house from the street.
  - i. This design also provides for a side entry garage that matches the design of the other homes on the street.
- h. In the image below you will see that from the elevation point of 910 it is sheer drop down 20 feet to 890 within the buildable area. This is a major hardship to have to build on a cliff face. Then it drops another 10ft very quickly. Note there is less than 40 ft of buildable depth to the lot that we can build on a before if drops off the cliff.



i. This will be my second house that I will build on the same street on the Chattahoochee River. I know and respect the importance of minimizing the impact in the Chattahoochee River Corridor. In fact, the site inspector from the City of Sandy Springs complimented

- me on keeping the double silt fences clear as we do routine cleaning as part of our construction practice.
- j. We have taken into account to provide double silt fences to protect the river and designed storm water management system for the house to have all downspouts go into the gravel filled underground stormwater retention trenches.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

Russell Schoneberger Property Owner 1425 N. Riverside Circle, Sandy Springs GA 30328 RECEIVED

MAR 03 2020

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

### Chattahoochee North Variance Letter

MAR 03 2020

February 29, 2020

City of Sandy Springs
Community Development

The Variance application is from the property owner - Russell Schoneber at 1425 N. Riverside Circle, Sandy Springs, GA 30328 for the track or parcel of land lot 129 of the 17th District of Fulton County and being Lot 12 of the Chattahoochee North Subdivision.

I support the request for variance to reduce the front setback from 60ft to 30 Ft due to the steepness of the lot and for the home to be more inline with the neighboring homes on the N. Riverside Circle.

Sandy Springs, GA 30328

Wade Chappell Springs, Ga 30328 DARREN HALL Sandy Springs, GA 30328



# APPLICATION FOR VARIANCE VARIANCE SUPPORT LETTER

MAR 03 2020

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

March 2, 2020

The Application is from the property owner - Russell Schoneber at 1425 N. Riverside Circle, Sandy Springs, GA 30328

### 1. Statement of Ownership and Interest

The track or parcel of land lot 129 of the 17th District of Fulton County and being Lot 12 of the Chattahoochee North Subdivision. Plat Block 126 of page 91 in Fulton County Records.

I support the request for variance to reduce the front setback from 60ft to 30ft due to the steepness of the lot and for the home to be more inline with the neighboring homes on N. Riverside Circle.

Thank you,

Zareh Najarian

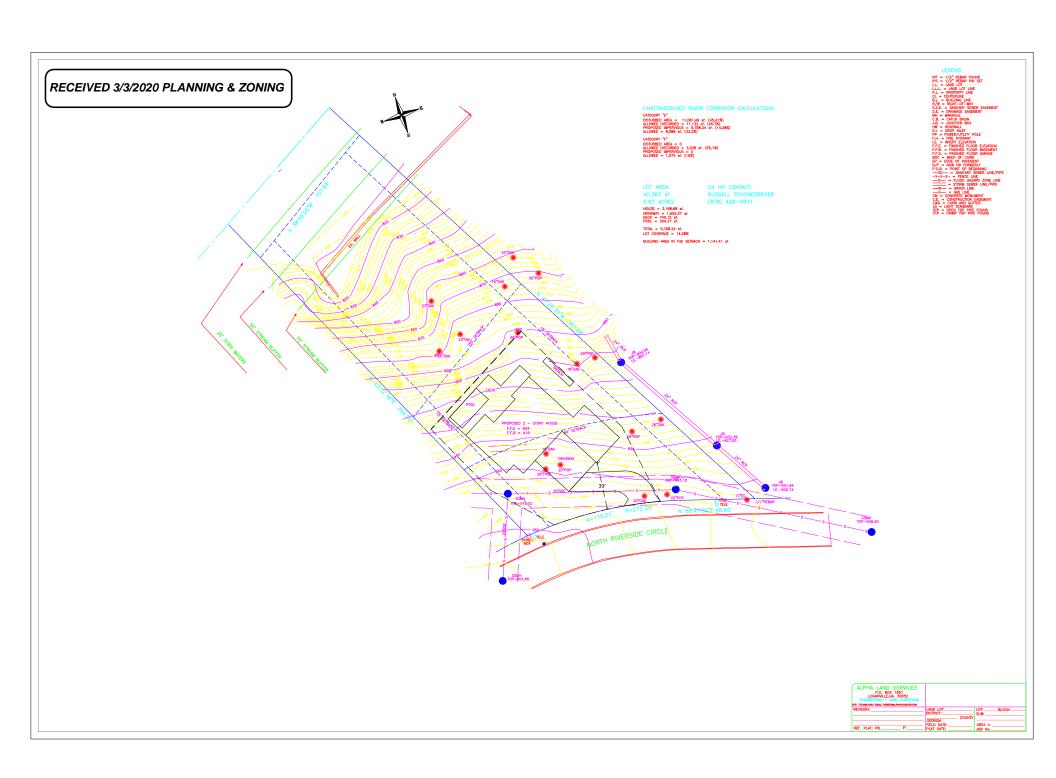
SANDY SPRINGS, GA 30328

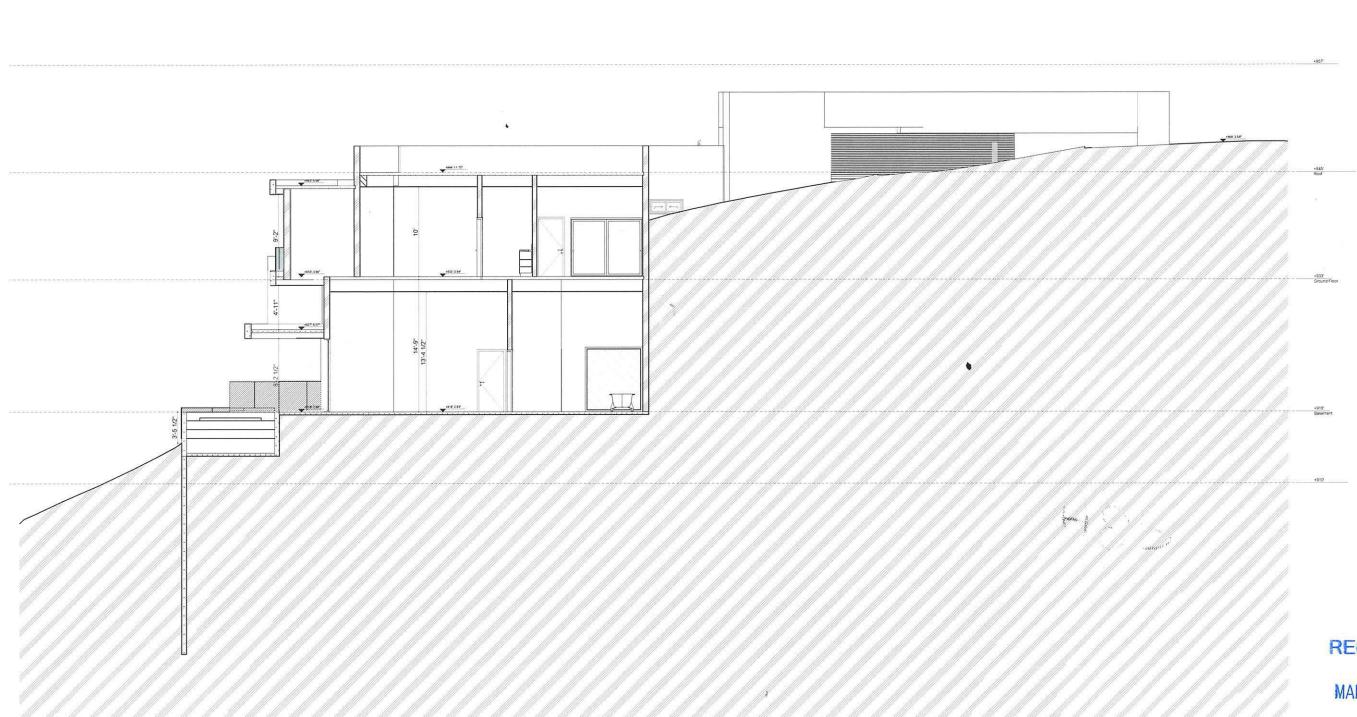
### LEGAL DESCRIPTION 1425 N. RIVERSIDE CIRCLE, SANDY SPRINGS GA 30328

MAR 03 2020

City of Sandy Springs Community Development

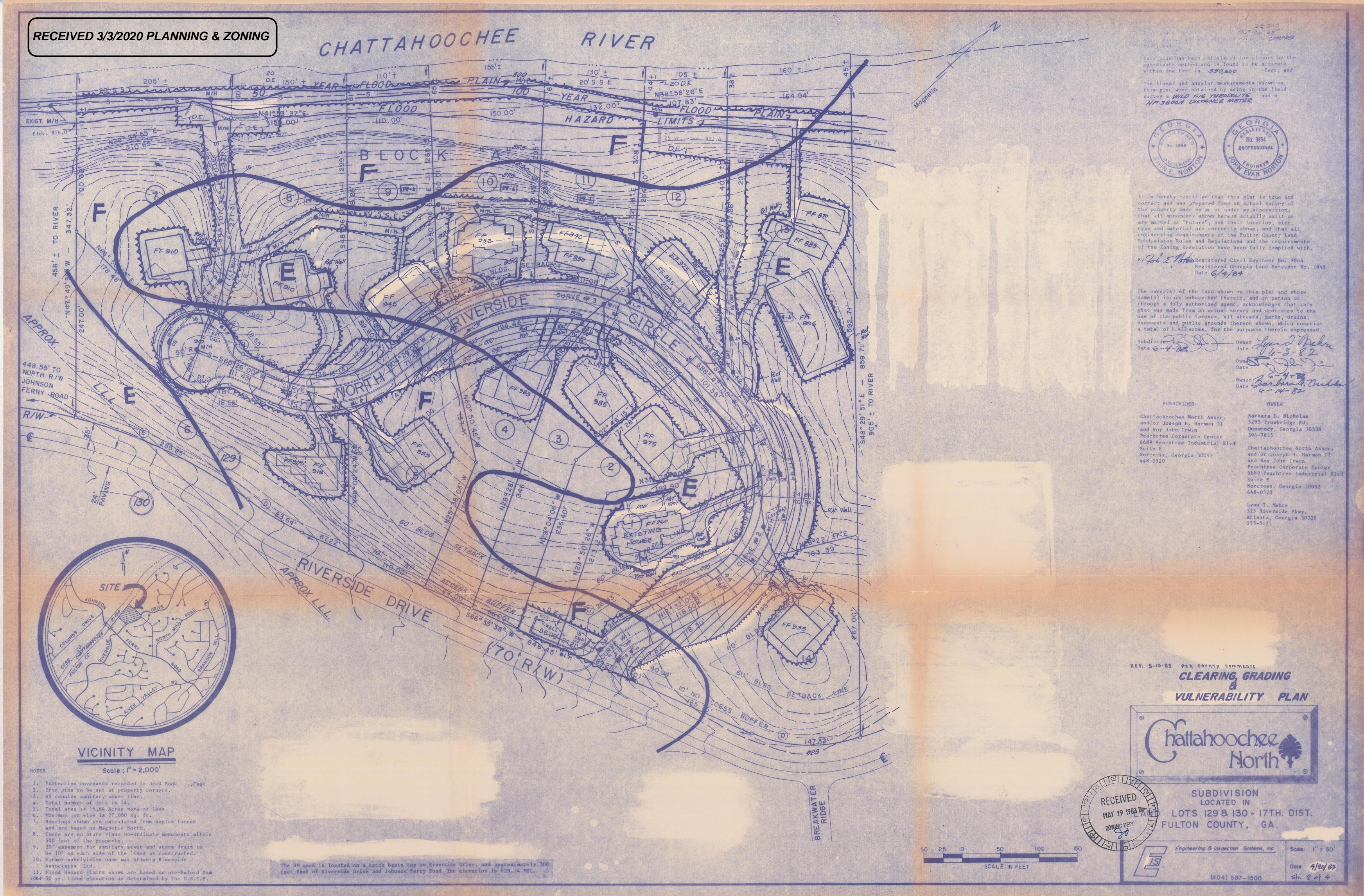
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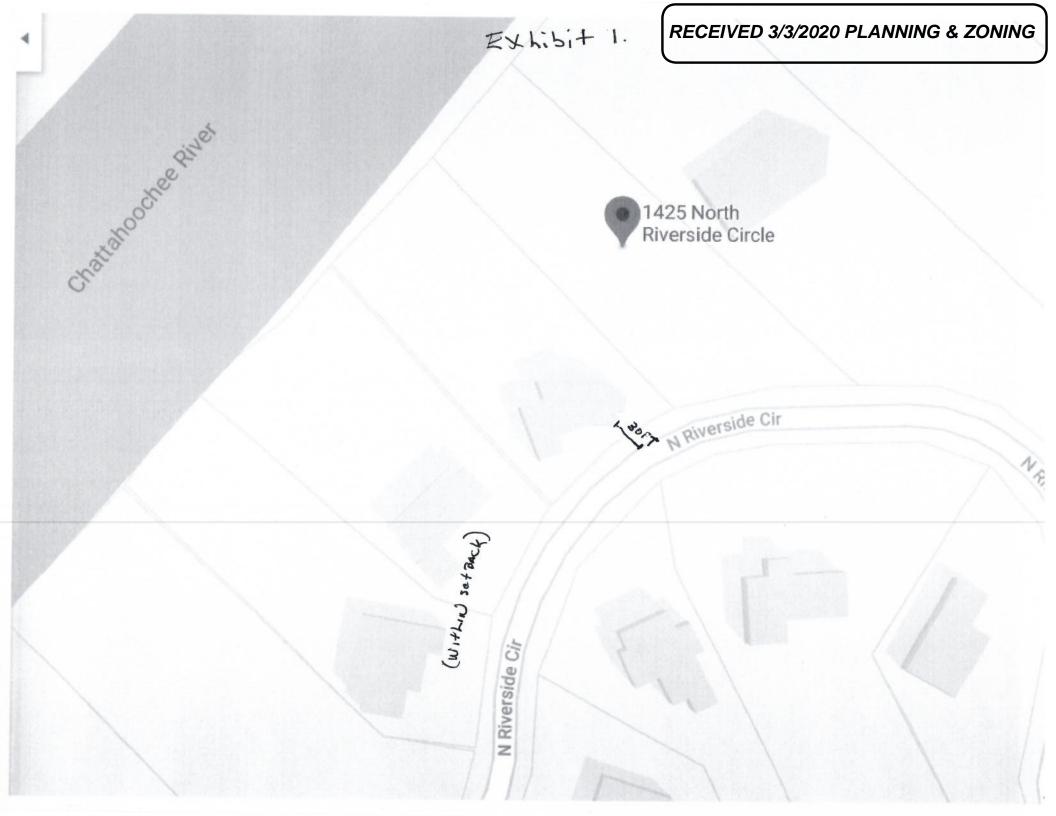




MAR 03 2020

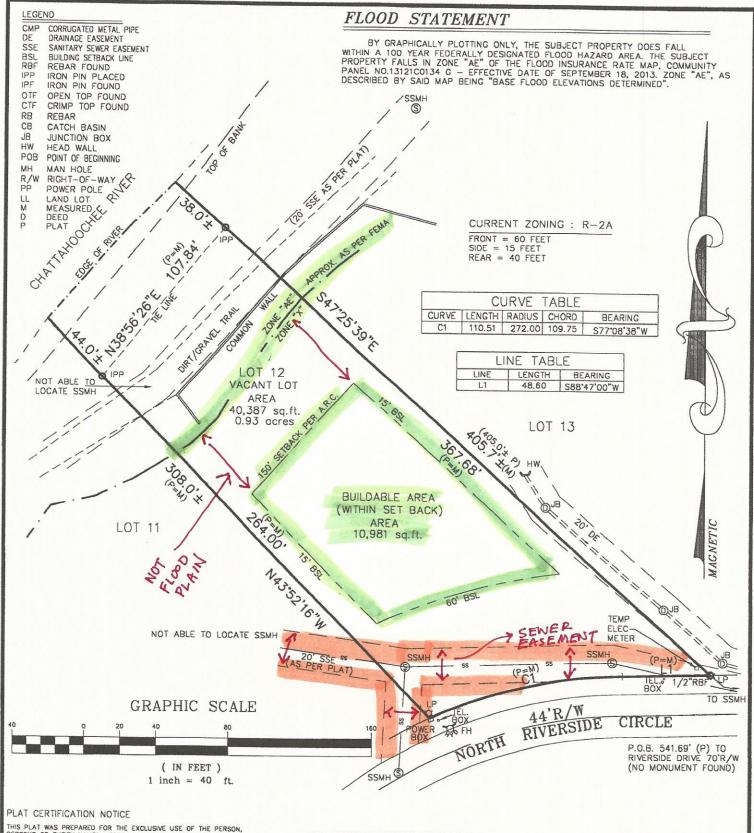
City of Sandy Springs Community Developmen





# 1425 N RIVERSIDE CIRCLE

# SURVEY - FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY



THIS PLAT WAS PREPARED FOR THE EXCLUSIVE USE OF THE PERSON, PERSONS OR ENTITY NAMED HEREON. THIS PLAT DOES NOT EXTEND TO ANY UNMAMED PERSON, PERSONS, OR ENTITY WITHOUT EXPRESS RECERTIFICATION BY THE SURVEYOR NAMING SAID PERSON, PERSONS,

IN MY OPINION, THIS PLAT IS A CORRECT REPRESENTATION OF THE LAND PLATTED AND HAS BEEN PREPARED IN CONFORMITY WITH THE MINIMUM STANDARDS AND REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW OF THE STATE OF GEORGIA.

THIS SURVEY WAS PREPARED IN CONFORMITY WITH THE TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PROPERTY SURVEYS IN GEORGIA AS SET FORTH IN CHAPTER 180-7 OF THE RULES OF THE GEORGIA BOARD OF REGISTRATION FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS AND AS SET FORTH IN THE GEORGIA PLAT ACT O.C.G.A. 15-6-67. AUTHORITY O.C.G.A. SECS. 15-6-67. 43-15-6, 43-15-19. 43-15-22.

NOTICE: IF RECORDING IS REQUIRED, CONTACT THE SURVEYOR FOR PRODUCTION OF A PLAT MADE SUITABLE FOR RECORDING

NOTE: ALL EASEMENTS DEPICTED ARE PER PUBLIC RECORD, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

INFORMATION REGARDING THE REPUTED PRESENCE, SIZE, CHARACTER, AND LOCATION OF EXISTING UNDERGROUND UTILITIES AND STRUCTURES IS SHOWN HEREON. THERE IS NO CERTAINTY OF THE ACCURACY OF THIS INFORMATION AND IT SHALL BE CONSIDERED IN THAT LIGHT BY THOSE USING THIS DRAWNING. THE LOCATION AND ARRANGEMENT OF UNDERGROUND UTILITIES AND STRUCTURES SHOWN HEREON MAY BE INACCURATE AND UTILITIES AND STRUCTURES NOT SHOWN MAY BE ENCOUNTERED. THE OWNER, HIS EMPLOYEES, HIS CONSULTANTS, HIS CONTRACTORS, AND/OR HIS AGENTS SHALL HEREBY DISTINCTLY UNDERSTAND THAT THE SURVEYOR IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR THE CORRECTNESS OF SUFFICIENCY OF THIS INFORMATION SHOWN HEREON AS TO SUCH UNDERGROUND INFORMATION.

THE FIELD DATA UPON WHICH THIS PLAT IS BASED HAS A CLOSURE OF 1 FOOT IN 10,000 FEET, AN ANGULAR ERROR OF 03" SECONDS PER ANGLE POINT AND WAS ADJUSTED USING THE LEAST SQUARES METHOD. THIS PLAT HAS BEEN CALCULATED FOR CLOSURE AND FOUND TO BE ACCURATE TO 1 FOOT IN 289,757 FEET. AN ELECTRONIC TOTAL STATION WAS USED TO GATHER THE INFORMATION USED IN PREPARATION OF THIS PLAT.

### Horst, Alexandra

From: Smith, Madalyn

Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2020 12:58 PM

To: Horst, Alexandra

**Subject:** FW: 1425 n Riverside circle **Attachments:** IMG-1597.PNG; IMG-1596.PNG

From: Russ Schoneberger

Sent: Thursday, March 5, 2020 11:25 AM

To: Smith, Madalyn < Madalyn. Smith@sandyspringsga.gov >

Subject: 1425 n Riverside circle

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Madalyn,

Below you will find two images of a computer rendering of the lot topography that is untouched. You will see how steep the lot is especially on the left side and how it greatly limits the area to build upon. It is about 20ft tall cliff.

Thanks,

**Russell** 

This e-mail message (including any attachments) is for the sole use of the intended recipient(s) and may contain confidential and privileged information. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this message (including any attachments) is strictly prohibited. If you have received this message in error, please contact the sender and destroy all copies of the original message (including attachments). The City of Sandy Springs is a public entity subject to the Official Code of Georgia Annotated §§ 50-18-70 to 50-18-76 concerning public records. Email is covered under such laws and thus may be subject to disclosure.

